

MERCURY.

Vol. I. SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., SEPTEMBER, 1894. No. 3.

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Why the Grey-Beards Hang in the Oaks.

I sat here at my desk idly tapping with my pen, trying to "dream up" a train of thought. The West wind was flowing softly in at the window and a mocking bird sat piping, oh, so sweetly, to his mate in the willow-vale, near my West window. As I looked out the South windows across the veranda, I saw the blue smoke from a pile of burning logs drift gracefully up and away, and I saw the long, gray moss that so beautifully drapes our trees here in Florida, sway and swing among the branches. Just then, little Marguerite's hammock, that had been swinging to and fro softly in the cool veranda, came softly to a stop, and I knew the little dame's siesta held her captive for a brief space; so I leaned back in my cool bamboo chair and drifted away to the Lotus land that is even drowsier than Florida in August. I seemed to drift up a broad, lazy stream, but I could not recall a craft, and Marguerite drifted too, near me somewhere, but the sense of sight did not tell me where. She was sweet and happy and hummed softly as a bee over a clover field, so I knew her thoughts were busy gathering sweets that presently she would share with me.

So we drifted on up the lazy river, wafted by a gentle wind. We noted lilies near the Western bank, and pink curlews chattering and stalking about; high up in air a buzzard whirled and turned in his noiseless way, spreading his soft wings so grandly on the summer air. Still Marguerite hummed softly, happily, and I waited, content to

feel her happiness. Then, presently she seemed to think out in a rippling way towards me and I caught the ripples as they came to me a golden scallop shell; and they were thoughts, like this: "Mamma, I have learned the secret of the grey-beards—the grey-beards in the oaks, Mamma, and that's why it is so peaceful and lovely here in Florida. Oh! those queer old grey-beards; they were wicked, delving elves; they just dug and dug and dug all day and nearly all night, and Mother Earth had no peace with their digging and delving for her treasures. But still they dug and forgot about their bodies being temples that must be left pure and good, sweet instruments for kindly deeds, for once a long time ago they were among Mother Nature's most faithful and honored helpers; and by their digging had made the oaks grow so broad and majestic, and the palms so tall and stately here in Florida. But that was long ago, and they found shining silver, so much, so much! And they put it on the leaves of some of the palms and on other trees, but they put a great deal on their beards, because they liked the shine of it; and bye and bye they had dug up all the silver and they held a council to find out how they could get more silver, because they wanted to put it on their beards to shine in the moonlight. And they, with one accord, decided that they must climb the oak trees and take off the silver lining of every leaf and rub it on their beards. So they climbed the trees, every oak tree and some of the spreading pines; but it was not easy to climb the palms, and, anyway, they had not put silver on many of the palms; only some palms on the "Keys" far to the South; so they did not think much about them. They climbed the trees and began to rub off the silver lining of the leaves on their beards, and they rubbed and rubbed so eagerly; and they forgot everything but the silver and the shine of it in the moonlight, and they rubbed and rubbed, and with every "rub" they shrivelled up smaller and smaller, until presently they had to leave off rubbing, for they were all shrivelled away, all but the beards and their little clutching hands. And a mocking West wind blew softly through the trees bearing salty damp from the Gulf, and it turned the shining silver into a dark grey. Then the mocking West wind was sorry and waisted the dwarf's beards gently to and fro, hoping to reburnish the silver by the gentle friction of the air and the bright moonlight. But

they have never been bright any more, and that was ages ago. But if you look sharp you can see glints of the shining silver, though it is mostly dull and grey; yet somehow, strangely, sadly beautiful. And the west wind is always sorry for the foolish dwarfs and for the mischievous trick that it played so long ago, and that is why it sighs so gently through the oaks, Mamma."

And this is the golden scallop shell and these the little one's thoughts that I gathered a day in August in the lovely land of flowers.

--*Jessie M. Bartlett.*

Two Little Workers.

[Continued from August Number.]

So Lillie went with May at once, leaving Bessie to run home for mamma. May's home was a tiny cottage with a bit of garden in front. Everything about it was neat and orderly. May, childlike, took Lillie right into the kitchen where her mamma was. The moment Lillie looked at her, she wondered where she had seen her before.

Lil was always thinking that. Many times, without telling anyone about it, she would try to study out why she had such feelings about people who were entire strangers to her, and she had never been able to solve the problem.

Mrs. Burns was tall and fair, like her daughter. Her face was sad and troubled, and her eyes looked as if she had been crying a good deal. But Lil liked her at once, and, like the little lady she always was, she extended her hand and said, "How do you do, Mrs. Burns? I know your girl, so I thought I'd come and get acquainted with you, too. We live near here, you see. That is our house over there," and she pointed out of the back window to the West house near by.

Mrs. Burns smiled kindly as she said, "That was very nice of you, my dear. We have been rather lonely. We have been here only a little while. May has been particularly lonely, and I am very glad she has found a little friend."

"She's got a sister, too," said little May. "She's comin' too."

"Yes," said Lillie, "May tells me that her papa is sick, and so I wanted to come over and see if I couldn't help

you to take care of him. Mamma always says I'm a pretty good nurse, so I thought I might do something. Does he like flowers? We have a lot of them in our yard, and I'd like to bring him some when I come again, if you think he would like them."

By this time, Mrs. Burns was having a hard struggle to keep back the tears. Why is it that we can be brave when we are alone with our troubles, but the sympathy or help, even of a child, seems to carry us away, and we lose all calm? This was what Mrs. Burns was thinking, as she said, "You are very thoughtful, dear, and I am sure he will appreciate it. Just wait until I see if he is awake. I know he would like to see you."

And so she managed to get out of the room for long enough to regain control of herself, leaving May and Lillie together. Lil was very glad when she heard a knock at the front door, and she followed May as she went to open it, for she had her suspicions as to who it was. Sure enough, there stood her mamma and Bess, mamma with a basket, and Bess with a big bundle in her arms.

And I may as well be honest about it, and tell you that Bess looked as if she could hardly wait for that door to open; and when it was, it didn't take her long to get into the kitchen and open that bag and get out a big peach for May. If you'd been near you would have heard her whisper to May, "*We've got cake in the basket!*"

Mrs. Burns was in her husband's room when she heard the rap at the door. As quickly as she could she made him comfortable, and started to answer the summons, not knowing that May and Lil had already preceded her. As she came out into the hall, Lil was just closing the door, and she was thoughtful enough to do this quietly, so as not to disturb the sick man. As she turned around, she saw what she never forgot as long as she lived. Mrs. Burns and her mother were standing and gazing at each other wide-eyed. Her mother's back was toward Lillie, but she could see Mrs. Burns well, and she noticed that her face was very pale. Presently, her mamma dropped her basket from her arm, and then the two women rushed into each other's arms. Then they had a little quiet cry together. And then they kissed each other and looked at one another again. Lillie noticed now that her mother was trembling.

After a minute, Lillie took a step forward. She wasn't quite sure whether she was dreaming or not, but she found she was wide awake. Then her mamma and Mrs. Burns went into the sick room together, and Lillie picked up the basket and carried it into the kitchen where Bess and May were.

Now, of course these little folks thought that what had happened was very strange, and they could hardly wait to be told what it meant. So, after Mrs. West had seen the sick man, had sent for a doctor and done what she could to make him comfortable, the three girls were taken into the other room, and then Mrs. Burns and Mrs. West told them all about it. And it turned out that these two ladies were sisters! Just think of that! They hadn't seen each other for over twelve years. When they were young girls, their parents had died, and they were separated, and finally they completely lost trace of one another. Then they were married. Mrs. West went to California, and Mrs. Burns stayed in the East. Then after a time, Mr. Burns took sick, and the doctor told him he ought to go to California. So he took his wife and little girl and went. For a time all went well, but later he lost his position, their money gave out, and finally, he took sick again. You all know how Lillie and Bessie found them, and what happened after that.

When Papa West came home that evening and heard the story, he went at once to see his new cousins. Next day, with the doctor's consent, Mr. Burns and his family were moved to Mr. West's home. It was not very long before he was quite well again, and then Mr. West took him into his store.

If you could take a peep into the West home now, you would find a very happy family. Mrs. West declared she would never part with her sister again, and so they all live together. And the P. B. Society has a new member, who also belongs to the Lotus Circle. Of course, you all know that her name is May Burns. And Mr. and Mrs. Burns have been added to the list of honorary members. So you see the P. B. Society is as prosperous as ever.

Mr. and Mrs. West are very lavish with their praise of the *active* membership, to whom, they insist, the present state of affairs in the West home is entirely due. But Bessie and Lillie and May, too, for that matter, are of the

opinion that it was *Karma*, and not they, that brought it all about. What do *you* think of it, children?

COUSIN CHARLES.

[Concluded.]

A Series of Exercises

FOR THE USE OF LOTUS CIRCLES.

First Theme—

UNITY.

Symbol—

THE CIRCLE.

Watchword—

Love.

The Director says: We plant a seed in the dark ground, and in a few days a little green leaf comes up out of the soil. What has the seed been doing down there in the dark? We only know that it has been very still; and we want to begin this class by being as the little seed is before its little leaf comes up into the sunlight—very still. (Silence for a moment.)

(Music by Leader, followed by March, to which children rise and move into a circle, clasping hands.)

Repeat in concert: "I am the Ego seated in the hearts of all beings; I am the beginning, the middle and the end of all existing things."

(Moving in a circle) Sing:

Ever coming, ever going,
In and out the life breath flows;
Christ within us, God around us,
Love and Light are everywhere.
Full of power, filled with sweetness,
Blessings pouring, joys bestowed;
Life is gladness, all of goodness,
From our Father and our God.

(Repeat first verse—"Ever coming, ever going, etc.")

(The bearer of the Banner steps into the circle, and asks:)

"What is the First Law?"

(All answer:)

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

(Standard Bearer asks:)

"What can make us do this?"

(All answer:)

"Love awake in our own hearts."

(The standard bearer leads, followed by all the others, singing:)

Wake the sleeper, rouse the dreamer ;
 Bless and praise him, O ! my Soul ;
 Rise to meet him, move to greet him ;
 Love triumphant
 EVERMORE.
 Raise the standard, shout Hosanna !
 We will follow where he leads ;
 Love within us, God around us,
 March to meet him in all deeds.

(Repeat softly.)

(The standard bearer again steps to the center of the circle which is formed and the children ask:)

“Why is your banner white, O Leader?”

(Standard Bearer:) “White means purity. The pure in heart shall see God, and God is Love. It is only the purity within us that can rise to him.”

(All ask:) “What is purity?”

(Standard bearer:) “Unselfishness.”

(All are seated).

(Director requests each one to bring two things next Sunday—and makes any other announcements necessary. The two things are, 1st, name and address of each one on a slip of paper; 2nd, that each one bring a single flower of some kind:)

(All sing:)

Wake the sleeper, rouse the dreamer, &c.

(Standard Bearer in center—Children march, reaching hands toward center for spokes; repeat, reversing direction and hand)

Day by day and hour by hour
 Turns the wheel around;
 Strong is the hub, the spokes are true
 There may we be found.

Turning ever, going onward,
 Round and round again;
 Sometimes up and sometimes downward
 Moving in the plan.

Life is one and undivided,
 Each fits in the whole;
 God's the center, we're this sunbeam,

Love is over all,

(Standard bearer asks)—“What is the Lesser Law?

(All) Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”

(S. B.) “Who is thy neighbor?”

(The movement here changes to a Grand Right-and-Left, like the dance of that name—the children singing:)

Those whom we meet,
Those on our street,
Those whom we greet,
Or know at all.

Across the land,
We grasp the hand
Of our own band,
God's children all.

Those in the way,
Those in our play,
A “Happy Day”
We give to all.

Beyond the seas,
In every breeze
Of love that frees,
We're one with all.

(The children have each brought a single flower, which they carry to a young lady, who teaches them some verse with “Love” in it. The first lesson is, that the single flowers taken together make a bouquet, or, that “Each is necessary to the whole.” The second lesson—and but one lesson must be made at a time—is that “We get as we give.” They received the pretty words for their flowers. The third lesson translates the words to a bouquet; the three verses that have been taught them, viz., “God is Love,” “Love thinketh no evil,” and “Love envieth not” are made to appear “beautiful,” “fragrant” and “pure,” so they decide that they have a “white” bouquet in return for the many flowers that all have given.)

Circle symbol:

The sunbeam that shines in a flower to-day,
To-morrow may gleam on the sea;
'Tis light in the flower and light on the wave,
And God's Light that speaketh to me.

The joy that I feel is of all things a part,
 And can never be claimed as my own;
 There is nothing of good that springs in my heart,
 But that good my neighbor has known.
 If sorrow is mine, all joy has grown dim
 My little strikes into the whole,
 And to love as myself is to recognize Him,
 The Ego that sits in the soul.

—*Lydia Bell.*

The Sentinel.

LOS ANGELES, CAL.

A recent letter from Los Angeles announces that a Training Class has been organized, called the "Vidya Training Club." A member writes that: "There is abundant work to do, but we do not feel daunted by that circumstance, for the harder it appears the more we realize that it is needed; so we are determined to make a success of it, and I have no doubt it will prove most beneficial to all of us in just the proportion in which we labor for it."

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

The H. P. B. Training Class has decided to devote one-half hour monthly to the study of Cushing's Manual of Parliamentary Rules.

Our Mail Bag.

Miss Lydia Bell, of Oakland, California, has very kindly furnished the exercises for children found in another column. The verses have been put to very pleasing music by Mr. Oettl. Miss Bell will be glad to answer any questions concerning the exercises.

From Jessie M. Bartlett, of Florida, we have received a very encouraging letter enclosing a most pleasing story for children.

Cut prejudice against the grain;

But gentle words are always gain. —*Tennyson.*

Editorial.

An illustrious orator once said at a trying time in the history of the United States: "Let us not deceive ourselves, sir." If the same words of the high-minded and honorable gentleman be repeated here—though the time is not a critical one—they are, nevertheless, of much significance.

We are constantly deceiving ourselves as to the wonderful powers which are latent within us—the power of Love is one. How strong, and yet so subtle! Does it not move mountains?

Then, again, we deceive ourselves as to the result of our conduct, and we perform little acts quite often which we think are unobserved. But, my dear children, do you know that every act, word and thought is known and is not lost? There is an "inner, ambient" medium which receives everything in its grasp as greedily as the ocean receives all objects that are cast upon it. This substance which we cannot deceive is the "Recording Angel" which the Christian Bible mentions. It is infallible, and does not make any false entries, but withal, it is absolutely just.

Again, we deceive not only ourselves, but quite often others. It is our thoughts, which daily grow purer, if we watch them, that make our character; our words and deeds are added.

It is the result of our good thoughts, words and deeds that are the treasures which we lay up in heaven.

It may not be so generally known that recent post-mortem examinations of the bodies of the blind reveal the fact that in the nerves at the ends of the fingers well defined cells of gray matter had formed, identical in substance and in cell formation with the gray matter of the brain, remarks the *Chicago Herald*. What does this show? asks a writer in the *Arena*. If brain and nerve are practically identical, is it not plain that instead of being confined to the cavity of the skull, there is not any part of the surface of the body that can be touched by a pin's point without pricking the brain? It shows, moreover, I think, that, given proper development by recognition and use, a sensation including all the sensations generally received through the other physical organs of sense may be received through the touch at the tips of the fingers.

It proves that a man can think not alone in his head, but all over his body, and especially in the great nerve centers like the solar plexus, and the nerve ends, on the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet. The coming man will assuredly perceive and think in every part, from his head down to his feet.

"MERCURY" would be glad to receive the names and addresses of Superintendents of Lotus Circles and also names and addresses of Presidents and Secretaries of the various Training Classes scattered throughout the country.

Meetings and Classes.

SAN FRANCISCO.

The Children's Hour, or Lotus Circle, meets every Sunday morning at 11 o'clock, at Rooms 35 and 36, 1504 Market St. All children are invited.

The H. P. B. Training Class meets every Friday evening at Rooms 35 and 36, 1504 Market St.

Free public lectures are given every Sunday at 7:45 P. M., at Red Men's Hall, 320 Post St. Strangers and inquirers earnestly invited.

OAKLAND, CAL.

"The Children's Hour" meets every Sunday at Hamilton Hall, corner 13th and Jefferson Streets, at 2 P. M.

Free public lectures on Theosophical subjects every Sunday at 8 P. M. at Hamilton Hall, cor. 13th and Jefferson Sts.

Defects are perceived only by one who has no love; therefore, to see them, a man must become uncharitable, but no more so than is necessary for the purpose.

—Goethe.

Great is Beauty's grace,
Truth is yet as fair as she!

—Campion.

The Children's Corner.

[This column will be devoted to questions and answers from children on Theosophical Subjects, which answers will be published with the initials of the sender.]

No. 7.—Where does the Thinker go when the body dies?

A.—The thinker goes to Devachan after the body dies, and there it rests for a long time, and then it wakes and comes to earth and takes a new body.

R. L.

8.—What gives the perfume to flowers?

A.—The soul within.

EDITH D.

9.—How shall we practice Brotherhood?

A.—By being kind to one another.

J. A.

10.—Why is it best to think good thoughts?

A.—Every person is surrounded by an aura, which is filled with their thoughts and actions, and, in meeting with sensitive people, they feel the thoughts and are influenced by them; for thoughts have more power than actions or words.

E. M. D.

A.—If you think evil thoughts you become evil, and if you think pure thoughts you become pure; but you should try to think pure thoughts because you throw them out to other people.

I. A.

11.—What would happen if everybody believed in Reincarnation and Karma, and lived up to their belief?

A.—In such a case, this world would be a state of perfect peace and harmony.

A. G. D.

12.—What is the Theosophical idea of instinct?

A.—Instinct is knowledge stored on the animal plane. What intuition is to man, instinct is to the animal.

A. D.

13.—Why do we have to come back and live our lives over again?

A.—To learn more, and to help humanity.

I. A.

A.—Because there is so much to learn that we haven't time in one life. If we are going to be wise, we have to come again and again in order to get wisdom.

R. L.

The following questions have been received from children of the different Lotus Circles:

14.—Where does our body go to when we die?

15.—What is Theosophy?

- 16.---Define imagination.
 17.---Who was Buddha?
 18.---What is Fohat?
 19.---Do Stones grow?

Wise Sayings.

Considering sacrifice and good works as the best, these fools know no higher good, and having enjoyed their reward on the height of heaven gained by good works, they enter again this world or a lower one.

Mundaka Upanishad.

Dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return.

Genesis.

Hence, one whose fire is burned out is reborn through the tendencies in mind; according to his thoughts he enters life. But linked by the fire with the Self, this world leads to a world of recompense.

Prashna Upanishad.

I accept and enjoy the offerings of the humble Soul who in his worship with a pure heart offereth a leaf, a flower, or fruit, or water to me. Whatever thou doest, O, Son; whatever thou sacrificeth, whatever thou givest, whatever mortification thou performest, commit each one unto me.

Bhagavad Gita.

There is no happiness except in righteousness.

Attanagaluvasa.

On first awakening from my sleep, I should pray that every breathing thing may wake to saving wisdom, vast as the wide and boundless universe.

Shaman's Daily Manual.

The wise man does good as naturally as he breathes.

"Mamma!" said a little Pittsburg boy, rushing into the room with the air of one carrying valuable information.

"What is it, dear?"

"Did you know that Brown's little baby was dead?"

"Yes, dear, I heard of it. Are you sorry?"

"Yes, but mamma, it was only three days old."

"I know, love."

"But don't you think God would be surprised to see it coming back so soon?"

Puzzle Department.

◆

[Send answers to Puzzle Dept., MERCURY, 1504 Market St., Rooms 34&35.]

1. DIAMOND.

1. A consonant. 2. A girl's name. 3. A great law of nature.
4. A large bird. 5. A vowel.

2. SQUARE.

1. The name of one of the world's greatest Teachers.
2. To uncover the head. 3. The Sanscrit word for law.
4. The name of one of Dickens' characters. 5. A kind of corn.
6. A fine cotton cloth made in India.

3. BEHEADMENT.

A building material take,
And a grain stack quite quickly you'll make,
By beheading the word.
A building material take
And this time a girl you will make
By removing its head.

4. NUMERICAL.

My 11-13-10-12-4-2 is to speak or sound a note.
My 5-9-1-8-12-10 is the name of a great man who lately died.
My 3-1-9 is a boy's name.
My 8-2-6-1 is close to us.
My 5-9-7 is a conveyance.
My all is a great truth taught by all Religions.

5. CHARADE.

Oh, guard thy speech, dear little child,
Ne'er let it wound thy *one*,
Let all thy words be gentle, mild,
Thy duty nobly done.
"Be kind to all," 'twas taught to you,
By One of whom 'tis said,
He had no home, nor cloak, nor *two*
Nor place to lay his head.
He tried, as others had before,
The law of love to teach—
The *whole* of man. This doctrine o'er
The great wide world should reach.

Reviews.

THEOSOPHIST. (July.)

Chapter 28 of "Old Diary Leaves" is intensely interesting; so much so that one is drawn to the scene and made witness to the events by the reading. But this is Maya. If one's Karma permitted the discovery of pots of gold or valuables or be closely allied with the elementals of the Mineral Kingdom, no great objection would be offered by many an F. T. S., who is hampered by the circumstances in which he is placed, from accomplishing more and better work for the cause he has at heart. Is this Maya? But, if one performs the duty of the moment, he has done all that the good Law requires.

"Clairvoyance" is a good article, based largely on testimony.

A knowledge of Sanskrit is necessary in order to follow the article on "Vedantic Non Dualism" which appears to be a review on M. N. Dvivedi's "Monism or Advaitism."

"Guardians of the Universe or Avatars" is an article dealing with a subject of which the West remains in ignorance. The aspirations of the truly devoted will be realized, the

promise fulfilled, and the cherished hopes become actual things. Work on, and be not dismayed.

LUCIFER. (August)

"The Watch Tower" holds high the motto, "Truth before and in all things."

"Devotion and the Spiritual Life" is an admirable paper. This is particularly fine: "What does Devotion mean in life? It means clearer vision, so that we may see the right; deeper love, so that we may serve the better; unruffled peace and calm that nothing can shake or disturb, because, fixed in devotion on the Blessed Ones, there is nothing that can touch the Soul."

Eliphaz Levi's "Letters" are remarkable for their plainness. There is no beating around the bush. The devil "gets it hard," and we are at last introduced to him. Devil—a negative conception of mind. When the devil grows old, he becomes a puppet. Moral; Do not grow old.

Other articles are very good. The August Lucifer is a splendid issue.

PATH. (August.)

"Man's duty to his Brother Brutes" is a timely article

When so-called Leaders of Thought loudly proclaim the belief that the hardships the animal kingdom has to undergo in order to gratify man's desires is not cruelty, because they are minus a soul to be saved, it is well to present the other side of the question, backed with strong arguments. If the idea of Non-separateness could only be realized, it would go far towards alleviating the distress that surrounds us.

"Proofs of the Hidden Self" should be read with close attention by all students, the result of which will enable them to substantiate the statement made therein. No study is so perplexing as the study of the Secret Doctrine. The stupidity of the student and the arrangement of the book has brought about many a headache while perusing it, and any effort in the direction of showing *how* will be a boom and a stimulus to greater diligence.

To attain God, the heart must be lowly. Trees are carried away by the flood, whilst rushes remain. The wise man knows himself to be a part of the Universal, one with all. Therefore, he does not put himself first; he abandons himself, and yet is preserved. He is great because he has no selfishness. He is not self-displaying, therefore he shines. He is not self-praising, therefore he has merit. Inasmuch as he does not strive, no one in all the world strives with him. That ancient saying, 'He that loses himself in the All shall be preserved entire,' is no vain utterance.

—*Lao-Tse.*

Seek again him who drives you away; give to him who takes away from you; pardon him who injures you. Think only of what is good for each, and consider not the wrong that has been done thee; do good unto all. Fair is the dwelling-place of those who have bridled anger and forgiven their enemies. Return good for evil. Be like trees that yield their fruits to those who throw stones at them.

—*Kash Al Safras, (Koran.)*

In parts superior what advantage lies?

Tell (for you can) what is it to be wise?

'Tis but to know how little can be known,

To see all other's faults and feel our own. *Pope.*